RESTORATION REVIEW

WHO OWNS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST?

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Jesus Today . . .

THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM

Because of the joy set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame. --- Heb. 12:2

Facing the cross as he did Jesus teaches us a vital truth about joy: *it* is *not dependent on the circumstances surrounding us.* The Scriptures are not telling us, of course, that the cross itself was joyous for Jesus, but that in spite of the circumstances of an agonizing death he found joy.

This is a lesson his disciples have always been slow in learning. Since the time that Jesus' closest followers fled in the wake of his arrest in Gethsemane, his disciples have been reluctant to "take up the cross daily" and follow him. The chiefest disciple not only fled but cursed and denied that he even knew him, a surprising reaction from a man so strong, but this was *in the face of the cross.* What others could not face, Jesus did, and we see that it was because of joy. No circumstance, not even the despised Roman cross, could rob Jesus of joy. The Bible assures us that it was because of the joy set before him that he endured the cross.

We are more likely to do the very opposite by avoiding hardships, lest they interfere with our happiness. We do not think in terms of joy and suffering. Yet it is one of those mysterious facts of life that fullness of joy is closely related to the tragic. The Messiah was described in prophecy as "a man of sorrows," and yet his mission was one of turning sorrow into joy. What a victorious line that is in Jn. 16:20: *Your sorrow will be turned into joy.* That is the meaning of Heb. 12:2. Jesus faced the cross because he knew his sorrow would be turned into joy, for beyond that cruel cross he would once again be with the Father.

Is this not the basis of our victory? Our sojourn in this world is going to be troublesome (period). All the promises imply that. There is no reason for us to suppose that the believer will find this world the proverbial bed of roses anymore than anyone else. The Lord does not promise us an easy life, but that he will be with us in a difficult one. "In the world you have tribulation," Jesus says in Jn. 16:24, "but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

That is our victory, that we can be of good cheer even in our kind of world, for the world has already been defeated. Defeated in that its true nature was laid bare by the mission of Jesus. Through its enticing but false values the world deceives those that live in

it, one of those deceptions being that joy comes through the abundance of possessions. Jesus was not deceived. He exposed the world for what it is, *carnal.* The peace it offers,. therefore, is a false peace. The world cannot give joy, only anesthesia.

I have overcome the world! That glorious truth is our only way to that joy that reaches from this life into eternity. If we allow the world to sell us a bill of goods, we can have no more than that happiness which the world gives, which is based largely on consumerism. We, like our Lord, defeat the world by believing that this world is not our home and that we have a destiny far beyond anything this world can offer. When we really believe *this* great truth even suffering takes on meaning. It caused Paul to say, “This small and temporary trouble we suffer will bring us a tremendous and eternal glory, much greater than the trouble” (2 Cor. 4: 17).

In some way in God’s scheme of things trouble brings victory and sorrow brings joy. This Jesus knew as he faced the cross. The world’s philosophy is that it is escape, not involvement, that brings satisfaction, and knowledge and riches and power, not tragedy, that brings victory. But Jesus was not deceived. He knew that it was only through the cross that the crown could come. The world says that it is *circumstances* that make for well-being. There is therefore no way for a cross to bring anything except death and defeat. But Jesus believed in a power that the world cannot understand, and that is how he overcame the world. And that is why he gives us the assurance, even in an untoward world, *Be of good cheer!* This is to say *Rejoice!* in whatever circumstance. This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith! (l Jn. 4:5).

Our Lord was nurtured in the Old Testament, which taught joy as well as law. “With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation,” we read in Isa. 12:3, while Isa. 65:18 says, “Be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create.” Then there is that great old psalm (126) that holds out the promise, “May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.” As a child of the Scriptures, Jesus lived in hope. He was no pessimist, for he had that love that believes all things and hopes all things. He went to the cross that way.

In the New Testament joy is even more evident, for it is described as a *given* of God and as fruit of the Spirit. The apostle Paul even in the circumstance of imprisonment could write, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice” (Philip. 4:4). In Gal. 5:22 he lists the fruit of the Spirit as *love, joy, peace.* It is fitting that joy is placed next to love, for it may be seen as the fruit of love. Love produces joy. In one of his greatest lines ever the apostle also writes: “The kingdom of God does not mean food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 14:17), and then there follows that great benediction, “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope” (Rom. 15:13).

These passages reveal something of the nature of joy. Its source is in believing. If we really believe that God will do what He says He will do, making good on all his promises, then we will have joy. At the same time joy is God's gift to us, once we seek it like the hart pants for the water brook. Joy is the essence of the kingdom, joy *in the Holy Spirit.* We may presume, therefore, that the Spirit dwells only in joyful people.

It is not the same as happiness, which is not necessarily a Christian virtue or a gift of God, for happiness is more outward than inward and is dependent on circumstances. One is not likely to be sick, poor, and unemployed and still be happy, but he can be joyful in any circumstance, which is enough to argue for its spiritual quality. Joy is rather the satisfaction and assurance that all is well where it really counts. It is the confidence that we *have* the victory and cannot lose, even when our body is wracked with cancer. We know there is something more! That is joy.

We may say, therefore, that joy always has an element of anticipation. It looks beyond the misleading values of this world, fully confident that the Father is up to something and that in His tomorrow we will know even as we are known. But still joy is a reality in the here and now in that God is at work in this world as well as in the next. However circuitous it my seem, His purposes are being realized in the *now,* and in that we rejoice. We are confident that His will is being fulfilled in each of us who believe, even in (and especially in) times of trouble. He uses the hardships to ready us for a glory beyond comparison.

That is why the Master urged that his returning 72 envoys *not* rejoice because the demons were subject to them, but because their names were written in heaven (Lk. 10:20). Power itself is not a virtue, but a simple trusting faith in what the Father can do is a virtue. It was with this trust that Jesus endured the cross. He knew it would be cruel and painful, but he also knew that it was the Father's will. That is joy, let come what may.

The joy that was set before Jesus, enabling him to bear all the ignominy of Calvary, is also set before us. It is a gift that the Father is eager to bestow through the Spirit to those who hunger and thirst for it. --- *the Editor.*

Joy is more divine than sorrow, for joy is bread and sorrow is medicine. --- *Henry Ward Beecher*

The most profound joy has more of gravity than of gaiety in it. ---*Montaigne*

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WHO OWNS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST?

A few weeks back while in the home of Julius Hovan in Gallatin, Tn., where I was conducting a series of studies with the Gallatin Church of Christ, Julian, who ministers to said church, came in one day to tell me he had just heard Paul Harvey, the famed news commentator, say something about the Church of Christ. I was sitting at his dining room table working on my history of *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, which we hope to have off the press later this year. Julius drives a church van about town, one that has "Gallatin Church of Christ" lettered across the sides. So we were both interested in what Paul Harvey would say about us.

It was one of Paul Harvey's quickies, like those bumper stickers he likes to tell about. He saw this sign out in front of a church building that read, "For Sale. Church of Christ. By Owner." While Harvey and Hovan got a laugh out of that, my own amusement soon led to a question, as funny things often do. *Yes,* I was soon saying myself, *who really does own the Church of Christ?* I doubt if we often look at the church from that viewpoint.

What Paul Harvey was talking about is simple enough, I suppose. Some congregation had its property up for sale, and they were informing the public that they were selling it themselves rather than through an agent. It was their property and they were selling it. They would be the first to insist that what they were selling was not the Church of Christ, but the *building* that belongs to the church. The church is the people. Most of us understand that. We would agree with this premise: *Anything that men can sell is not the Church of Christ.*

Paul Harvey's prank may reveal something about the world's view of the church, something good. There" would have been nothing funny in what he saw on the sign except for the assumption that *Christ really owns the Church of Christ.* Jesus has his church up for sale! That *is* sort of funny. But Harvey, of course, understood the situation. There was *property* for sale, owned by a particular denomination or congregation. Whatever there is about a church that God owns, it is the pope or bishop or eldership or board or people that owns the property. And of course they can sell it just as men can sell anything else they own. Or is it that God really owns the property too, not just the people that use it. We would but be the trustees of what is really His, even if we *legally* hold title. Not many county clerks would care to register a deed made out to God or even to Jesus Christ! So we put it in our name, the Church of Christ that is, but we are really only the trustees.

Is that the way it is or are we really the owners of the property? If Paul Harvey had seen a sign that read: *Church of Christ. For Sale by the Trustees,* he would not have given it a second thought, and it certainly would not have gone out to his millions of listeners. As it was he was paying us a compliment, and perhaps teaching us a lesson along with it. He was saying: "That church belongs to Christ, otherwise the sign would not read Church of Christ. At least that is what the sign says. It says the owner has it for sale. Does Christ have it for sale?"

He certainly would have found nothing incongruous (which is basic to humor) in a sign that read: *First Baptist Church. For Sale. By Owner,* and he probably could not have done anything with: *Our Lady Catholic Church. For Sale. By Owner.* He could nail only us with that one, or perhaps a Church of God. We must admit to the incongruity of God or Christ putting things up for sale. They may buy, but do they ever sell?

My mind got to working overtime in that I conjured up a scenario, supposing that Paul Harvey decided to buy the property:

Harvey (to someone standing on the front steps): I am interested in this property and would like to talk to the owner about it.

Step brother: One of our deacons is handling that. I'll see if I can't find him for you.

Deacon (approaching): May I help you, sir?

Harvey: I may buy this property if the price is right. What does Christ want for it?

Deacon: I beg your pardon. What did you say?

Harvey: You say this is the Church of Christ or Christ's Church, and the sign says the owner has it for sale. What is the owner's price? What does Jesus want for all this?

Step brother (in an effort to help the confused deacon): Maybe I better go fetch one of the elders!

Well, you can complete the scenario. The elder would of course set Mr. Harvey straight. "Yes, of course, it all belongs to Jesus, but he is not exactly the owner, not *legally* that is. We are the actual owners and so we set the price, which is one million even," the elder would explain, as good business men do.

I am not sure how Paul Harvey would respond. He seemed to be interested, so he might shell out the cash right there on the spot. Or he might say: "I am terribly disappointed. I was really buoyed up by that sign, for 1 have always wanted to do business with Jesus. 1 was thinking that if he owned it, he wouldn't be asking too much for it. After all, what would he do with the money anyway?" - *the Editor*

To me, the conception of two people living together for 25 years without having a cross word suggests a lack of spirit only to be admired in sheep. Where there is spirit there must be sparks. Don't imagine that your first row in married life will be the end of everything. It is more likely to be the real beginning. - *A. P. Herbert*

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DOES THE BIBLE HAVE "THE STRIKE ZONE"?

I often think of what one of my old Harvard profs used to say about the issue in the church today being hermeneutics or interpretation. In recent decades, he would say, the question was the nature of the *kerugma*, but now it is *How do we interpret the Scriptures?* While New Testament scholars presently are concerned with such matters as unity and diversity in the New Testament, hermeneutics remains a basic issue, not only among scholars but in the church at large. I know of no people that have more of a problem with interpretation than my own Church of Christ people. We may not be aware of it, but many of our difficulties stem from what I believe to be a faulty hermeneutics.

This means that if we can get two questions resolved many of our difficulties would be minimized: (1) What kind of a book is the Bible? and (2) How is it to be interpreted? I do not propose in this piece to answer these question in any detail, but to examine a metaphor or two that we often use in handling the Scriptures. The Bible is sometimes likened to a Sears-Roebuck catalogue, or some such composition of details and specifics, suggesting that modern faith and the modern church are as uncomplicated as ordering a pair of pajamas from a mail-order house. The size, color, design, type of material, and price are all detailed. So it is with the church in following the New Testament. No problem. Why doesn't everybody see it the way we do? We have no such differences when ordering from a Sears catalogue?

Sometimes we liken the Bible (the New Testament in particular) to a blueprint used by a builder in erecting a structure. All the details are scrupulously spelled out, the blueprint being almost like a photograph. The builder can be sued if he does not conform *exactly* to every specification *(specs* they call them). The church has a blueprint like that in the New Testament, we are told, so there is no excuse for not setting up the church precisely as it is

in Scripture - in name, doctrine, worship, work, and organization. The New Testament provides all *specs.*

Or the New Testament is like a baseball rule-book. Should such a book disappear for a time and the game of baseball go out of existence, and then in some distant tomorrow, in a world that knows nothing of baseball, if someone should find the rule-book and follow it exactly, she would have precisely the same game of baseball that we have today. The same nine players on the field, same shape of playing field, same balls and strikes and homeruns and all the rest. Precisely! This is what it means to restore the New Testament church, we are told, for the New Testament is that kind of book, like a baseball rule-book.

Recently I received an interesting letter from one of our fine ministers in Louisiana, who gave me a variation of this metaphor in that he urged me to watch out for "the strike zone," drawn quite obviously from America's greatest pastime, made famous by the likes of Babe Ruth. The Babe certainly was aware of the strike zone, as are all pitchers and umpires, and this preacher thought I should be. The strike zone of the Bible, that is.

He told me of the umpire who explained how he called them. "I look at the strike zone," he said assuringly, "and if it isn't there its a ball!" This was the preacher's way of settling the matter of instrumental music. He looks at the strike zone (the New Testament, we presume) and doesn't find the instrument, so its a ball, which means it misses the mark and therefore is sinful.

In my response to this brother (thank God, he's my *brother,* organic or inorganic!) I told him of reading of a doughty old umpire in the majors who responded gruffly to the catcher who kept anticipating his calls: "They ain't nothin' till I call 'em," he growled at the catcher. Quite true. In baseball a strike is what the umpire calls a strike! No doubt but what in the history of the game many a ball has been a strike and many a strike has been a ball. But "They ain't nothin'" until the umpire calls them the way he sees them.

Preachers are sometimes like that umpire. They presume to preside over the strike zone, making sins out of their own opinions. Things are sinful when they call them sinful! That may do for baseball, but is that the way to handle the Scriptures? So often man minimizes what God calls a sin and maximizes what he calls a sin. If we follow such a metaphor as the strike zone, should not God be the umpire? Since God makes no call either way about instrumental music, in the New Testament at least, how can our friend in Louisiana be so sure that it is a sin? If he means that the instrument is sinful *to him,* that is a different matter. In the area of scruples where our conscience must reign as arbiter, we *do* make the calls --- but only for ourselves, not for our brother or sister. "Let each one be fully persuaded in his own mind" is our norm (Rom. 14:5). God calls that one!

I like metaphors and I am not saying that there is no place for these illustrations, even the one that views the New Testament or God's will as "the strike zone." But if these fellows don't mind, I'd just as soon for God to call the strikes! Drunkenness is a sin, for it is not in the strike zone. But how about an occasional beer or a cocktail with the evening meal? Lying is a sin, for it is not in the strike zone, but how about an untruth? Murder is a sin, for it too misses the strike zone, but is every abortion a sin? Or withdrawing life supports?

I advised our Louisiana brother that he'd better watch where he uses his metaphor lest those to his *right* clobber him with it. How about the supporting-church enterprise that conducts *Herald of Truth?* Some are adamant in saying it misses the strike zone. Sunday schools? Plurality of cups for the Supper? Literature (study leaves our pioneers called them!)?

It is a fair question: *Who has made us the umpire over the strike zone? - the Editor*

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Highlights in Restoration History . . .

THE MAN WHO INTRODUCED THE ORGAN

One day recently Ouida and I were recalling some of our old friends, a pastime that does not necessarily go with advancing years, for we've been doing it all our lives. We reminisced about the old preacher that married us (He got his lines confused and I had to help him out from the groom's perch, as if I didn't have my hands full already!), a brother we both greatly loved, now long gone to his reward. Ouida recalled his hangup about instrumental music, how he often bemoaned the probability that most folk in the Church of Christ would offer no serious objection if it were introduced, as if this would be the ultimate in apostasy. He referred to the organ as "Balaam's ass" (I never thought to ask him *why),* and one would suppose that an image of Buddha in the church would be no more offensive than the presence of an organ.

This sort of thing, which may be more emotional than logical, is not without its parallels in other communions. There are a lot of Texas Baptists who go bananas if they see a bottle of wine or beer in a neighbor's refrigerator, and there are still Quakers who get upset over anything very modern. To our Amish friends the refrigerator itself is an abomination, with or without beer. As for instrumental music, there are old-line Presbyterians in Scotland who are as rigid about it as our old preacher friend --- and who probably make better arguments against it!

It is as unfortunate as it is interesting that religion should ever take this turn, but it is as old as Pharisaism. If those Ph.D.'s of the law would burden themselves with whether one can expectorate (One can spit on a smooth stone but not a rough one!) or tie a horse (Yes, if he does so with one hand!) on the Sabbath, then there is no wonder that our folk would hassle over organs, chandeliers, and stained glass windows, and with equal sincerity. And many Pharisees *were* sincere, including one Saul of Tarsus.

As for instrumental music, some have suggested that it has become such a big deal among us because of its high visibility, what Paul Tillich might call *an ontological reality!* After all, we can't *see* errors of the mind all that obviously, however dangerous they may be. But a three by five box that makes sounds and stands over in the corner for all to see is something else! We are sometimes so paranoid about this that we have to *cover* the organ (hide it from sight!) if one chances to be where we assemble.

The issue has had its humor. In the old days when folk in Indiana had never even seen an organ, much less heard one, Daniel Sommer was beating the trail warning churches against it. It is a matter of record that his vehement protests in one church that had given no thought to getting an organ became so curious about the matter that they were inadvertently led by Sommer to investigate and finally adopt the organ! A church in St. Louis divided over the organ, with the pro-organists leaving. Meeting on their own, they could not yet afford an organ, so the anti-organ group had an organ (which they would not use of course) while the pro-organ group did not have one! Still another church took architectural safeguards, building its facility with doors and windows too narrow for the importation of the controversial device.

But the purpose of this piece is to acquaint you with the man who first introduced an instrument. He surely deserves some kind of recognition, considering what he set in motion. Dr. L. L. Pinkerton, a physician in his early years, began his ministry with high credentials, being baptized under Alexander Campbell. Combining his gifts, he served as both surgeon and chaplain in the Union army. When he returned to his native Kentucky, his home church in Louisville, where he had once ministered, would not receive him because of his Union loyalties. He was a professor at Kentucky University for awhile, but he continued to hear the call to preach. For a time he preached among the blacks, being very sensitive to the injustices heaped upon them.

In time he was both an editor and a schoolmaster, and it was in Midway, Kentucky that he had both a school and a church, as well as an orphanage, and it was there, insofar as we know, that the first instrument was introduced, a melodian, in 1849. The singing was so deplorable, Pinkerton insisted, that it scared the rats away. But the melodian did not reign for long, for as the story goes, one of the elders who opposed the instrument, arranged for

his slave to purloin the helpless intruder under cover of darkness and stash it away in the elder's barn for safekeeping.

This unpretentious offender is on display at Midway Christian College, serving as a grim reminder of the beginning of the end of the unity that prevailed among our people in those days.

Pinkerton had some other "firsts" in his ministry, being something of a cross between a maverick and a liberal. He was the first to espouse open membership, which meant that he received as members those not yet immersed, a practice that was controversial from the start. This made him "worse than a drunkard" in many Disciple eyes, as he put it. And he was one among the first to become a settled pastor, which was also innovative in the 1840's. When the agencies began to merge, such as the missionary society, he was a supporter. He even ventured to question the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy, so he was a bit "far out" for his day.

So the melodian was obviously a matter of little moment to him, his chief concern being "a fierce sectarianism and intolerant dogmatism," as he put it as an editor, that had emerged among Churches of Christ. One of his contemporaries, J. S. Lamar, one of the editors of the *Christian Standard*, agreed with Pinkerton that a new spirit of intolerance had risen, and this was the greatest peril faced by the Movement. Lamar blamed it on men of "comparatively small calibre" who had come into places of leadership. He said they drew attention away from the essential truths and vitalizing principles that had sparked their reformation up until then by emphasizing incidentals and making them tests of soundness. Pinkerton wrote of those who would smash a church over whether communion was in the morning or evening, and Lamar complained that some of the brethren supposed Christ died so as to keep organs out of churches.

But there is something interesting and exciting about this period of our history. Despite the legalisms and intolerance, the churches did not suffer an open split. If it was the organ that divided us, it took it several decades to do so. If Pinkerton gave us the first one in 1849, there were numerous others by the 1860's, and we had "organ" and "non-organ" churches in fellowship with each other. Even the staunchest foes of the organ, J. W. McGarvey and Benjamin Franklin, did not believe in making it a test of fellowship. Franklin had a way of saying "Let there be no non-fellowship," despite his vigorous protests. It is noteworthy that from 1849 until the 1880's when the Churches of Christ began to be a separate communion, there was only one leader among our people that made instrumental music a test of fellowship, and that was Moses E. Lard.

This bit of history shows us how it might have been and provides a clue as to how it might yet be. There was probably no way for our brethren in those days to have avoided disagreement over the organ, just as no other frontier church avoided it, once the organ became available. But they nonetheless lived with the difference for several decades. No one insofar as we know drew the line on Pinkerton's church in Midway, Kentucky. Some may have fussed about it, but no one was ready to break fellowship. Even in the 1860's when Moses Lard began to insist that the faithful not even attend an organ church and that the loyal preachers not preach for one, there were but few that paid him any mind. And Lard himself, once the Civil War was over, wrote of a *united* brotherhood, and was insistent that if the war had not caused an open split, the Movement would never divide.

So it might have remained that way if our forebears had remained true to their old adage, *We are free to differ but not to divide.* Some leaders arose with a different spirit who believed the converse of that, *We are free to divide but not to differ,* and thus made the organ (and other things) the occasion for an open split, so that by 1906 the Churches of Christ and Christian Churches were recognized as no longer one fellowship.

These facts from history raise the question of what actually divided us. Church after church divided over the organ after having had the organ for decades! Is it not a spirit that divides people rather than things? Yes, the factional spirit. When the party spirit comes into the heart, it will find reason enough to divide.

So, we can back up and take over where they left off, in those days when they could disagree and still accept each other. Our only hope is for the spirit of love and acceptance to overcome the spirit of division and rejection. - *the Editor*

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Pilgrimage of Joy. . . No. 55

JUNGLE FELLOWSHIP

W. *Carl Ketcherside*

With the beginning of 1974 I knew that we had but two more years to edit the paper. We had resolved to discontinue Mission Messenger with the December issue of 1975. It had been a part of our lives for thirty-seven years. And it would be difficult to bid it farewell. There was never a time in all of those years that we were not conscious of it. We ate with the paper during the day and slept with if at night. We calculated time from one issue until the coming of the next.

For a long time I had been wanting to do a series of articles on pure speech. I was motivated in the desire by a statement of Alexander Campbell in his "Synopsis of Reformation." I could see that this was of prime importance. Accordingly, I commenced to write on the general theme. I started off with a quotation from Joseph Addison in the British journal called *The Spectator,* which was born on March 1, 1711. I closed with the statement, "I want to be with all who are saved, and I expect to be. I care not one thing for any partisan flag over an exclusivistic rampart. My hope is in Christ Jesus. I began in the Spirit and I have no intention of trying to be made perfect in the flesh." The writings for 1974 were all gathered into a book called "Pure Speech."

It was our custom to bind about 2250 of the books each, year. They have long since been sold, and seem to be even more popular now that they are all out of print. It is my hope that they may continue to bear the message when I leave for worlds unknown.

My first trip in 1974 was one of great interest to me. For a number of years, missionaries from Independent Christian Churches had labored in Brazil. They had planted congregations in Brasilia, and at various other points throughout that great land. In more recent times Churches of Christ began to send in workers who tended to congregate in Sao Paulo, and to work out from there. Each of these with a common restoration heritage met for a combined conference. One year one group brought in a speaker, the following year the other group had the privilege of doing so. For several years the Christian Church brethren had been asking for the privilege of having me come. Each time they were told not to do so. I was dangerous; it was not time to have me yet. My thinking was too advanced to risk having me.

Finally, the brethren decided they were going to have me whether it was approved or not. The others said that if I came they were going to ask someone to come also.' They selected Reuel Lemmons, editor of the Firm Foundation. We had never really been together, although both of us knew we should meet if possible. We had tried to do so once or twice without success. Brother Lemmons had been provoked into making an attack upon my position in his paper. I replied and three articles from each of us had appeared in both journals. He had written one entitled "Blind in One Eye," and I had also answered it. I had tried several times to get articles published in the *Firm Foundation*. Each time they were returned with a curt note saying that I was not welcome to write.

Realizing the influence of this fellow-editor I was anxious to meet him and to be with him. The circumstances were ideal. The camp, which had been rented from the Presbyterians, was carved out of the jungle. There was a kitchen and dining room at one end, and a circle of cabins, with a large assembly-hall at the other end. Brother Lemmons and I stayed

in a very small unit together. In our bedroom we could reach out and touch each other from the bunks.

I learned a great deal about my companion while we were together. I am not sure he was as comfortable with the brethren from the Christian Churches, as I was. But he was formally polite to all and gave no offense. He was brought there to do a job, and he did it, and that was it. I found him to be a mellifluous orator of the old school. Some of his presentations rivaled the best of William Jennings Bryan, “the golden voice of the Platte.” This was especially true of the early morning devotionals in which we took turns speaking on one of the psalms. Since our visit I have had a longing to talk at length with Brother Lemmons about the community of saints in which we both share. There is no justifiable reason for us being apart. Certainly there is none for us appearing as enemies.

It would require too much space for me to describe all that took place in the jungle vastness, and I shall desist. It became apparent to me that the men who work there must find a solution to their problems or perpetuate among humble people a division which grew up on the frontiers of America. It is incredible that those who believe in the same Jesus, who worship the same God, who read the same Bible and sing the same songs, should project an image of alien churches upon the native minds. I worked with the young people, boys and girls who were children of the missionaries. Some of them came from remote Indian villages in the jungles of the Amazon. They were schooled by their mothers. We had a great time together.

I flew back to Saint Louis from Rio de Janeiro, in a frightful blizzard. We were bandied back and forth between airports where we were not permitted to land. We were flown to Dulles and not permitted to leave the plane. Finally we were cleared for landing at Kennedy in New York. I finally arrived in Saint Louis, having been for almost twenty-four hours without food. The next morning Nell suffered a blackout and fell with a thud in the bathroom. When I reached her I thought she was dying, from the look in her eyes. I called an ambulance and she was in the emergency room all day. They never determined the cause of the blackout, but she was in frightful pain for the ten days she stayed in the hospital, and had to be cared for when she returned home. I was glad that the providence of God brought me home when I was most needed.

It was about a month later I was scheduled to speak three times and conduct a workshop at the Christian Writer’s Clinic, held at Holiday Inn North, in Cincinnati. It was a rich experience for me. The clinic was conducted by Standard Publishing. The editors of their various publications were all present, giving advice and sharing experiences with budding journalists. I have since met people all over the United States who have told me they met me there. They have expressed themselves as being appreciative of the

encouragement they received. Some of them have since blossomed into authors and have brought me copies of their books. I never had the opportunity to attend such a school as I was growing up. I simply started writing down the thoughts which came to me in my moments of meditation. I never thought I would be an editor this long.

On March 7-9 I was in Kingsport, Tennessee. I stayed in the congenial home of Max E. Smith. We had a full schedule of meetings. I spoke three nights, conducted forums each morning, spoke at two luncheons, delivered three radio addresses and made two thirty minute television appearances. It was a blessing to me to be able to enjoy the hospitality of such a gracious home and the fellowship of such a fine band of disciples as I found there. I have often thought about how the sectarian spirit cheated me in not allowing me to know so many whom God loved and whom I also found it easy to love.

I was scheduled to be in Xenia, Ohio, April 3-5, and as I was flying into an airport some twenty miles away, I noticed the pilot was having a difficult time landing the plane. We were being buffeted by heavy winds. The sky outside was almost as black as night. When we got to the home Of Bro. and Sister Jones where I was to stay, we learned that Xenia had experienced a frightful tornado and many homes, schools and churches had been wiped out. We hurried to the meetinghouse to find it had been turned into a rescue station. People came straggling in, dripping from the torrential rain which had followed the storm.

Some of the members had lost their homes. Included among them was Brother Isaac Flora, the minister. Many of those who came to the church building still had loved ones missing, in some cases buried in the debris. The women warmed up the chili which had been prepared for our lunch the next day. Coffee was made and thankfully received. Everyone had a tale to tell about how the storm swept in leaving devastation in its path. There were those who could not talk. The uncertainty numbed them. The tornado was one of scores which had harassed the country on that frightful day. Our meeting was canceled and the city began the monumental task of cleaning away the rubble in preparation for rebuilding. It was a tragic thing.

I went next to Los Angeles to make a special film with the Vernon Brothers. It was made at Warner Studios. They had been making “Homestead, U.S.A.” which featured their birthplace and home in the Ozarks. It was a successful presentation. The four brothers formed a real quartet. All of them had married wives who were singers and who had a quartet of their own. Then the children followed in the footsteps of the parents, and they could form almost any kind of combination of voices. They did an excellent job of sending forth the message on wings of song. Best of all, they did not strive to make it by their distinctiveness. They just got up and sang their heads off, and that was distinctive enough

in our day. Besides that, all four of the boys were preachers and they could exhort and encourage their listeners to be faithful.

You will recall that it was the Vernon Brothers who led singing for me and did special numbers years before, when I was at Lakewood, California where Ernest Beam was serving when he died. I was there at the invitation of his successor, the inimitable William Jessup, who will never receive enough honor in this world to repay his noble efforts in behalf of the unity of the believers. It was great to be reunited with the brothers again. We used the old Roy Rogers set and present on the program with us was Dale Evans (Rogers), his wife. I was able to talk with her frequently during the long day of filming and I came to admire her a great deal. She told me of their desire to have children and how they had adopted so many of all races.

The night before I had spoken at Westchester to a full house. It was served by one of my favorite people on earth, Harold Thomas. He succeeded Bill Banowsky, who had resigned to become president of Pepperdine University. Harold had been a real pioneer, a trailblazer in the northeast, especially in Maine. He and his good wife were great souls, addicted to the kingdom, willing to make themselves vulnerable for the sake of Jesus. In the same congregation was Harry Robert Fox, Sr., who, with his family had spent so many years in Japan, beloved by the native peoples. I already knew Harry Robert, Jr., and Logan, both of whom were possessed of a fabulous knowledge of the Word. It was a rare privilege to see their revered father.

On May 9, I delivered the baccalaureate address for the graduating class at Cincinnati Bible Seminary, and the next week was in a meeting at Amarillo, Texas. It was my first time to actually conduct a series for brethren who had always opposed the Sunday School. Some of the brethren were a little skeptical of my coming. The preacher was David Sullins, a unique and precious brother. I stayed in his home. Dave had been in Germany during the war, charged with the repair of the motor vehicles for a contingent of motorized calvary stationed near Berchtesgaden, the mountain retreat of Adolf Hitler, about ten miles from Salzburg. He had fallen in love with an attractive German girl and they married. It was fun attempting to “sprechen sie Deutsch” with her, especially since I only remembered from my childhood, the little warning taught all children:

“Messer, glauber, schare, und licht,

Ist for kleine kinder nicht.”

But we had a great meeting and talked about what God expected of all of us in this age. I went back once again for another meeting and found the brethren able to work across the lines with those who did not agree with them.

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UNDERSTANDING HUMANISM

Julia Bloxom

One of the differences between humanism and Christianity is that humanism teaches that life on this earth is the only life. Humanists do not believe in either the resurrection or eternal life, and such ideas as God, creation, and prayer are seen as myths to be exposed.

They thus believe that if there is to be a Utopian heaven it must be built in this world or not at all. This can be accomplished in part by indulging in self pleasure. Humanists make no apologies for their hedonistic philosophy of "eat, drink, and be merry." They take a liberal view of sex outside of marriage, and they wish "to take the lock out of wedlock." This can be achieved, they say, by encouraging extramarital sex so as to give marriage partners more diversity in sex, and by legalizing speedy, no-fault divorces in every state. This might be called "selfism" rather than "humanism. "

Another way to set up this Utopia is by promoting the "Community Good," which embraces all of humanity. The "Good" means the welfare and happiness of all people, which humanists feel can be accomplished by abolishing nationalistic and racial prejudice. While Christians and humanists agree that prejudice must be abolished. They differ on how this is to be accomplished. The humanists contend that it can be achieved by man himself, apart from God, while Christians believe there can be no justice, or peace, that does not ultimately issue from our Almighty Father.

Another difference between humanism and Christianity is that humanists believe moral values are relative and that ethics are situational. The Humanist Manifesto II says: "Ethics is autonomous and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction. Ethics stems from human need and interest." It is therefore no surprise that humanists reject most Judeo-Christian laws, such as the Ten Commandments, calling them "dogmatic," "outmoded," and "authoritarian."

More could be said about humanism versus Christianity, but the major differences have been stated. The essence of these differences is that humanists see man as the supreme authority, thus making him god, while Christians believe all power and authority rest with God, the Creator and sustainer of all life.

Humanism is deceptive in that it often lurks behind such best-selling titles as *Pulling Your Own Strings* and *Looking Out for No.1*, which, though they have some merit for the discerning reader, can be harmful to those not firmly rooted in the faith in that they

encourage man to love himself above all else. This is the law of humanism and the essence of the Humanist Manifesto.

The essence of the "Christian Manifesto," on the other hand, is found in Mt. 22:37-40:

> "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets."

-- 4339 *El Campo, Ft. Worth 76107*

The way to convince another is to state your case moderately and accurately. -- *Benjamin Franklin*

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OUR CHANGING WORLD

Our church here in Denton is sponsoring a missionary effort in London called Disciples House (52 Courthope Rd., London NW3 2LD), led by Vic Hunter, former editor of *Mission*, and Phil Johnson, the purpose of which is to build a family of believers dedicated to the renewal of the church in the inner-city of one of the great cities of the world. This is planned as a long-term effort, and it needs some friends who will both support it and become a part of its mission, even if from afar, and even if the gifts are small. They need regular and sustained help, month after month, for years. Our church believes you will get good mileage for your benevolent dollar. A committee in our church, chaired by an airline pilot, carefully supervises the business and keeps all donors well informed on what is going on in London. If you are interested in helping us meet the high inflationary problems in London, you may write directly to Disciples House or to Dave Killen, 2908 Golden Circle, Denton, TX. 76201. Mailouts about the mission are available.

The Napa Valley Christian Church in Napa, Ca. is considering a name change, to Napa Valley Church, “a non-denominational Christian Church.” They may also do away with “Membership,” and thus become simply the Body of Christ for all who choose to be a part.

The Church of Christ in Stroud, Ok. is doing something really different. Rather than to put a picture of the church on the front page of their bulletin, as is common, they put pictures of the *real* church, *people* in their congregation in action.

The Brookvalley Church of Christ in Atlanta makes public its benevolent budget, which ran almost $19,000 in 1980. This went to the hungry, rent for the needy, clothes, medical care. And this is a special fund called “Good Samaritan Fund” and does not include money spent from regular church treasury.

A news letter from Wycliffe translators discusses their reaction to the martyrdom of Chester Bitterman, one of their translators in Columbia, South America, killed by guerrillas. They saw the murder as an attempt to drive the translators from Columbia, but Wycliffe people say they are there to stay and will even step up their operation. They predict that the murder of a believer will touch some Columbian hearts who will eventually have their own Damascus Road experience and join the cause.

Ervin Waters, onetime champion debater for non-class, one-cup Church of Christ, has for many years now given his life to preserving the unity of the Spirit. He gets lots of flak from his old friends, and it is a joy to see how he moves above sectarian loyalties in a sectarian world. He is now publishing a journal called *Fellowship Forum*, Box 3821, Temple, TX. 76501, which is free for the asking. If you read him, he will take you inside an arena that is probably much different from anything you’ve known before, and I do mean arena!

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BOOK NOTES

We would like to acquaint you with a writer of significance that you may not know about, John White, a psychiatrist with the University of Manitoba in Canada. The doctor writes alongside where you live and we urge you to read some of his stuff. There is *Daring to Draw Near,* a most helpful volume on prayer, from Abraham to Jesus, and *The Golden Cow,* an analysis of materialism in the 20th century, 4.55 postpaid. There is also his little book, a nugget of gold, on *The Cost of Commitment*, which deals especially with suffering,

2.85 postpaid. Then there is that very relevant book, *Parents in Pain,* which offers comfort and counsel to parents who are over their heads in problems, 5.55 pp. If you want to try all four, only 16.00 postpaid.

Another Canadian that you would do well to read is J. I. Packer, whose book *God Has Spoken* tells *why* God chose to reveal himself. I! gives you the secret of Bible study. 4.55 postpaid.

William Barclay, the favorite of many, has a translation of the New Testament now available in inexpensive soft cover, with introductions to the various books. 3.55 postpaid.

Ronald E. Osborn is an easy-to-read historian among the Disciples of Christ, and his book on *The Faith We Affirm* is on the basic beliefs of the Disciples. You will appreciate his chapter on "The Light of Scripture," as well as what he says about covenant and baptism. 3.25 pp.

Our readers must love history, for they keep buying *A Short History of the Early Church* by Harry R. Boer, and it is one way to learn a lot about what happened to the church in the early centuries, 4.55 pp. As for our own history, you should by all mens get a copy of *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell* before it goes out of print again, 19.95 postpaid. *The Fool of God* is a historical novel on Campbell's life, 5.50 pp.

If you want something that really gets inside the question of a woman's place in the church, one that deals with every issue and every passage, and by a *woman,* then we highly recommend Dorothy R. Pape's *In Search of God's Ideal Woman,* written within the drama of a missionary family. 6.55 postpaid.

If you are looking for a responsible interpretation of the last book of the Bible, one that deals with differing points of view, we recommend *Interpreting Revelation.* 6.95 post paid.

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READERS' EXCHANGE

The longer we live and the older we become the more “liberal” we are because the trivia is pushed aside for the urgent. We also experience grace as we need it. Only those who experience grace can share it. Believe it or not, this church and the school here are the most open I have ever been around in my life. --*Calvin Warpula, West Monroe, La.*

I appreciate the challenge that the mind matters. So many are unaware of the need to apply the mind to life’s situations. How else can we honor the Creator who gave us that great gift, a computer mind to store up knowledge and retain it. I thrill over the precious memories of 50, even 60 years ago. Praise the Lord! His blessings are beyond my comprehension! Keep stretching our minds. --*Rachel Howard, Anderson, In.*

My dad had a heart attack and died instantly. He loved and appreciated you so very much. I wanted you to know of his death. You taught him so very much about loving others and *expressing* that love. I saw dad’s attitude change as a result of knowing and hearing you. For that I want to say thank you. -- *Denise (Gamauf) Wiseman, Alton, Il. (formerly Lowell, In.)*

When we maintain even one standard for membership that doesn’t come from God, we become a sect of the church. If any Christian is unwelcome in our fellowship *by design, systematically,* then we have become a sect. -- *Steve Goodman, Salem, Or.*

Nell is slowly but surely pulling back from the brink. Her unquenchable faith and her indomitable spirit are all factors in her recovery. -- *Carl Ketcherside, St. Louis, Mo.*

I! is so refreshing to read material like yours. It makes me realize that I am not totally “crazy” in many of my own personal deductions, especially regarding the extreme legalism and the exclusive posture assumed by so many brethren. Within the Black church (there is a Black Church of Christ) there is much more freedom and seemingly an increasing awareness among the younger ministers of a continuing effort to restore the spirit and power of the primitive community of saints. Yes, many Blacks have taken positions postulated by white brethren, but I sense a deeper commitment to the Christ of scripture rather than to the sermons and editorials of our papers. -- *a black minister, name withheld*

I enjoyed your recent article on youth “ministers.” I become more and more convinced that we should not encourage young men to begin to “preach” until they are about 25 years old. Until then they should engage in study and perhaps short sharing talks in their congregations. We feed the young and impressionable ego and then wonder why we have

so much trouble later on. I speak from experience, and wish my own start had been different. -- *Thomas Langford, 3703 48th, Lubbock 79413*

If it were not for Richland Hills (Ft. Worth) I'm sure we would have left the "Church of Christ" long ago, looking for some place to accept us. For years we struggled with church because we did not want to be sectarians. We discussed how heaven would be if it were made up of people who presumed to be the only Christians, that it would not be such a nice place after all. I could never really believe that all other believers besides us were on the way to hell. Keep up the good work. Don't let anyone stop you! -- *Elaine Morrison, 6217 Cahoba Dr., Ft. Worth, TX. 76135*

We appreciate you so much for urging the likes of us to stay put and try to live for Jesus even tho' the teaching is so far from His truth. We surely know how the brother feels who wrote you about his desire to leave and go somewhere else to worship. You might suggest a tape ministry for him. That's how we study and gain strength from those who delve deeper into scripture. --*Marguerite McSpadden, Dumas, Texas*

Your answer to Fern West was read with interest. I too have thought of going somewhere else but it would involve heartache and sorrow. My church was organized in 1900 and my grandfather was one of the first elders. Later my father was an elder. Back in those days we were called Campbellites. I was raised in the narrow traditions I now deplore, but thanks to you and Carl Ketcherside I now view some of my earlier life in the church with dismay. Recently a sister stated in class that no one but members of the Church of Christ would go to heaven, that all others would be lost. Sitting beside her was her second husband, whose first wife was a good woman but a Baptist. A couple sitting in the class has one set of parents that are Church of Christ, the other set Baptists. They had once more come back to church after being driven away by that kind of attitude. I don't know what it did to them this time. Thanks for listening. -- *Gladys Crumpacker, Pollock, Mo. 63560*

By the time you receive this issue our bound volume for 1979-80 will be ready. Yours will be mailed to you with invoice enclosed, if you ordered one. Send us your order at once if you want a copy and have not ordered, but send no money. We will bill you. We do not yet have the exact price, but it will be *less* than our sub rate, which makes the binding free. Besides the double volume we have only two other volumes still available, those for 1977 and 1978, which are 5.50 each plus postage.

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